

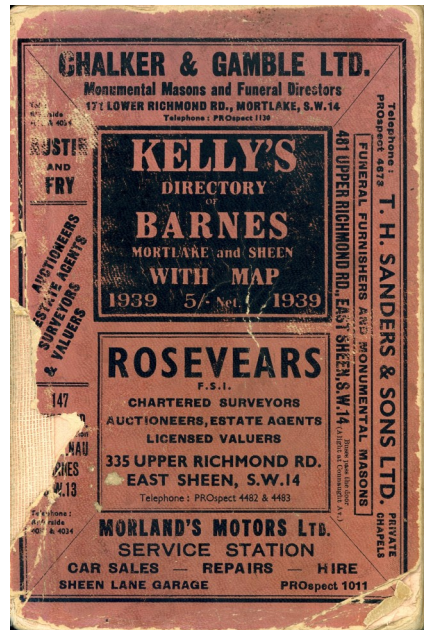
Resources for Research

Kelly's Directories

The Society often receives requests from its members and others who want to know about a house where they or one of their ancestors lived. The first place to look is in the local Kelly's Directory. In the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, Kelly published an annual directory listing the commercial enterprises and private residents in an area, arranged both by street and in an alphabetical index.

Kelly's Directories are not as comprehensive as the censuses in that they only list the head of the household, and give an occupation only if the individual was running a business from that address. However, they fill gaps left by the censuses which were only conducted every 10 years, and are not available after 1911 (the most recent census to be released under the 100-year rule). Kelly's directories also contain many advertisements and information about such things as postage rates and collections (as well as guides to seaside resorts). The Local Studies Library in Richmond holds directories which cover Mortlake and East Sheen from 1886 to 1939, but there are some gaps in the coverage of Barnes.

The directories evolved from the Post Office London Directory which until 1844 was produced semi-officially by the chief inspector of letter-carriers. Frederic Fergus Kelly held that position when the Post Office decided to stop producing its directories, and he set up his own company to publish them. The first directories of counties outside London were published in 1845; and during the next sixteen years the series was extended throughout England with Kelly buying up competing directories or putting them out of business.



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